

CLAIMS

1. A device driver for use in a computer system comprising a processor, a memory and at least one device, said device driver being operable
  - to monitor an operational status of said device, and consequent upon a change in said operational status,
  - to generate fault report data indicating whether the change of status was caused internally within the device or externally by another connected device.
2. A device driver as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said fault report data includes an indication of an operational status of the device.
3. A device driver as claimed in Claim 1 or 2, wherein, if said fault report data indicates that said change of status was caused externally, said device driver is operable to generate fault direction information indicative of a connection from which the external fault is perceived.
4. A device driver as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 3, wherein said operational status of said device is one of up, indicating no fault, degraded, indicating that the device is still operational but with impaired performance or down indicating that the device is not operational.
5. A device driver as claimed in Claim 4, wherein said operational status is determined from at least one of a time to respond to a command, an amount of data communicated via an I/O bus, an amount of data processed by said device, whether information is being correctly processed or from an error interrupt signal generated by said device.
6. A device driver as claimed in any preceding Claim, wherein said device driver is operable to generate environment data representative of at least one parameter value

of at least one sensor associated with a device, a group of devices or a Field Replaceable Unit (FRU) containing one or more devices.

7. A device driver as claimed in any preceding Claim, wherein said device driver generates said operational status information from at least one of a number of memory accesses performed, a time taken to respond to a command, and an amount of data processed.

8. A method of controlling a device of a computer system, said method comprising the steps of

- monitoring an operational status of said device, and consequent upon a change in said operational status,
- generating fault report data indicating whether the change of status was caused internally within the device or externally by another connected device.

9. A method of controlling a device as claimed in Claim 8, wherein said fault report data includes an indication of an operational status of the device.

10. A method as claimed in Claims 8 or 9, comprising

- generating, if said fault report data indicates that said change of status was caused externally, fault direction information indicative of a connection from which the external fault is perceived.

11. A method of controlling a device as claimed in any of Claims 8 to 10, wherein said operational status of said device is one of up, indicating no fault, degraded, indicating that the device is still operational but with impaired performance or down indicating that the device is not operational.

12. A method of controlling a device as claimed in Claim 11, wherein said operational status is determined from at least one of a time to respond to a command, an amount of data communicated via an I/O bus and an amount of data processed by

said device, whether information is being correctly processed or from error interrupt signal generated by a device.

13. A method as claimed in any of Claims 8 to 12, said method comprising  
- generating environment data representative of at least one parameter value of at least one sensor associated with a device or group of devices, or a Field Replaceable Unit (FRU) containing one or more devices.
14. A computer program providing computer executable instructions, which when loaded onto a computer configures the computer to operate as a device driver as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 7 or perform the method according to claims 8 to 13.
15. A computer readable medium having recorded thereon information signals representative of the computer program claimed in Claim 14.
16. A device driver substantially as herein before described with reference to the accompanying drawings.
17. A method of controlling a device substantially as herein before described with reference to the accompanying drawingns.